Comic Fandom Monthly

THE MAGAZINE OF COMIC BOOKS AND RELATED FIELDS FIFTY CENTS

SEPT. 1971
NO. 1

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September 1971. Number 1.

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Comic Fandom Monthly, September, 1971 is an article and opinion fanzine published and edited by Joseph Brancatelli, 2016 East 23rd Street, Brooklyn, New York, 11229. Published monthly. 50 cents a copy. Subscriptions: $6 for one year (12 issues).. Print run: 1000 copies. Entire contents Copyright ©, 1971, by J. Brancatelli.

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EDITORIAL

Usually when a fanzine editor does any editorial for the first ish of a fanzine, he's too gosh-wowy to recognize its shortcomings. I'm a realist, and a cynic, so here's CFM's shortcomings; We had advertised two things that didn't appear.The article on the Warren imitators fell through.The interview just never materialized and I dropped the story rather than rehash various issues. The article will appear,but I've got too many backlogged articles for it to appear until the January 1972 issue. Mark Evanier also didn't make it.The first installment didn't get here on time. He should be here next issue. If in the future, an article is advertised & doesn't make the book,please be understanding. The ads MUST go out two weeks before an ish goes to the printers (this isnt my fault, tell Love and Light to correct their ad deadlines.

Thanking-wise, I've got to thank every one of the columnists, who were notified of the book's existance only 3 weeks before the article deadlines.

As for this tired editor, I can't really complain about the look of the boo. Not as slick as I'd wanted, but give me time. It's funny,I won't even know if people want this book until the third issue. I may lose my shirt.

Finally, send me letters. Letters on contents, formats, opinions, any damn thing. Letter col next issue.

NEXT ISSUE

CFM 2 READY SEPTEMBER 24

* As our feature story in OCTOBER'S COMIC FANDOM MONTHLY we depart just a little from comics. Dr. Fredric Wertham has supplied me with his article "The Sound of the Trumpet." This was originally published in THE JOURNAL OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA. In it Dr. Wertham continues indicting violence as a major force in children's lives. He lashed out at comics, and now his attention is focused on movies. Interesting reading.

* CLIFF LETOVSKY'S "View from Canada" column talks about France's two comic magazines, CHARLIE and PILOTE. Contents and art are discussed.

* JOE THOMASINO strikes again, this time going after Gerry Conway's new book THE MIDNIGHT DANCERS. Calling it "As tasty as a potato hero sandwich," he confounds us by his cutting remarks. I wonder if Mister Kline is the villian here too?

* Our other 6 columnsits (Pinaha, Isabella, Masters, Jenkins, Stoelting and Clish) return, and we introduce two new ones. Mark Evanier is going to join us (I hope) as will fandoms only couple to meet through a Batman letter col, Cliff & Sue Biggers

THE WANDERING FAN

BY TONY ISABELLA

"It is criminal to subject Doug Wildey's beautiful art to the sterile reproduction in 'Outlaw Kid.'"

Welcome to the past!

Was it really 4 years ago that I first did this column for a little zine called *Concussion*? The first issue of that zine was 20 pages of poorly-reproduced prestige. It saw the birth of a fan writer of Italian heritage--modesty prevents us from recounting all this writer has accomplished since--and the premier of the column you're about to read.

The Wandering Fan started out as a column of **short** takes on comics and comic collecting. It remained that way through all of *Concussions* 7 issues. During this time, *Concussion* picked up an "Alley Award" in spite of this column. When editor Mike Robertson went into the service, this column was left homeless and was found in several zines in very many forms. Eventually, this title was used on my apa-zine for *CAPA-Alpha*.

With this issue of *Comic Fandom Monthly*, the column will once more appear in its original format. We will discuss anything in the field of graphic art and a few things out side of the field. We shall attempt to be both witty and profound.We'll even attempt a contest or two--my *Concussion* contests were noted for not having contestants; no one ever entered! We may fall on our faces, but we will do it in style!

PRINT IT AGAIN, STAN!

Nobody who understands the economics of the comics could possibly blame Marvel for their many reprint titles. However, we can cast stones at the general shoddiness of these titles. Especially the once-a-year "specials". So, far the only title that deserves that label was the *Rawhide Kid Special*, by virtue of its printing some classic stories by Jack Kirby, some of his great early Marvel work. All of the other specials merely print the next story in line, without so much as a new cover to spruce up the package. The only story that really fit a special edition of a comic was the battle between Spider-Man and Giant-Man,a rare and well-told story reprinted for the *Spider-Man Special*. The only high point of the *Fantastic Four Special* was the new title logo, one that can be utilized on the regular monthly comic.

The regular reprint comics show a similar disinterest. It is criminal to subject Doug Wildey's beautiful artwork to the sterile reproductions used in the *Outlaw Kid*. The reproduction cripples an excellent Stan Lee-Reed Crandall short, "The Town," in the October issue of that title (#8).

The classic symptom of disinterest manifests itself in "When the Kid was marked for murder," a **Two-Gun** "Kid" tale from *The Mighty Marvel Western* #15. The six pages are taken from 3 stories of the Kid, put together with no regard for consistency. I would have thought that the stories would at least have to be read first before printing. I guess I was wrong.

What's the solution? Find someone who cares enough about the reprints to do a good job of packaging. Not so long ago, Marvel's reprint books--*Fantasy Masterpieces* and *Marvel Tales* #1 and #2--were the best in the business. Why not again?

IT'S WHAT'S IN BACK THAT COUNTS

Ironically, while Marvel is having trouble with reprints, the National gang is making their larger-size magazines more exciting with reprints. It's an adventure going to the store and discovering an Olden age classic in the back of the book. The Kirby books are my personal favorites. All those devil-may-care heroes of the

"Where O'Neil forced the heroes into emotional responses, Friedrich handles them naturally."

1940's--the Boy Commandos, Manhunter, the Sandman--are back. And, with the reprinting of the 1st Newsboy Legion story, a long-time wish of mine has been fullfilled.

And it doesn't stop with the Kirby books. In *Superman* we're getting all those great human interest stories of the 1950's, as drawn by Wayne Boring In *DC SPECIAL*, we see Superman versus the Toyman from 1947 and Batman battling the Penguin, circa 1951. Wonder Woman also gets in to the act with a group of stories that are interesting from the historical standpoint, although flawed artistically. And the future promises even more discoveries to come. Happy Adventuring.

WHAT"S RECOMMENDED

And, lest our readers think that only reprints are worth looking at, here's a **few** recommendations...

Astonishing Tales #8: If you can get by the Ka-Zar adventure without laughing yourself sick--the Jungle Lord fights lizard-men, ape-men, and a few men-men--you'll find an attempt to do a different kind of super-hero. Len Wein's "This Badge Bedeviled" is not a complete success, but it bears watching.

Captain America #142: This one is an action yarn. It manages to combine elements of the-monster-on-the-loose story, the Mission Impossible story, and the super-hero story successfully to make an issue that is throughly enjoyable.

Girls' Romance #159: And for those of you who aren't afraid of storekeepers' stares, this issue contains a great short story called "Love Letters," the most moving story DC has ever presented in a love comic.

The Dark Mansion of Forbidden Love The first of three DC gothics is an interesting book indeed. Aided by the great artwork of Tony DeZuniga, "The Mystery of The Missing Bride" is a slighty slow-paced chiller including just enough suspense to hold the reader through it's 37 pages. Don't let the romance label prevent you from buying one of the best comic book mysteries of the year.

Jimmy Olsen #141, and *Mr. Miracle* #4: What can I say about Jack Kirby's comics? Despite some occasional short comings in script and art, they're still more fun to read than any other comics.

Justice League #92: Mike Friedrich is begining to prove just what he can accomplish with the formerly two-dimentional heroes of the Justice League/Justice Society. Where Denny O'Neil forced the heroes in to making emotional responses,Mike handles the heroes naturally. And with the guest-appearances of the Robins, the story is even more impressive. Robin--on either earth--is Mike Friedrich 's character. No one can get in to the Teen Wonder like Mike can. There's a strong bond between the character and the writer. Mike Friedrich thinks he is Robin, and if it makes the stories better, who cares?

Psycho #4: Pseudo-horror marches on, but occasionally, books like this one allow a writer to do something different. Two newer laborers in the terror garden, Marv Wolfman and Richy Buckler, have used *Psycho* to present an unusual fantasy, "Out of Choas." It's a two-parter and perhaps I'm being premature, but if Marv stays away from the trick ending pitfall, he's got a good one here.

Spider-Man #101: It's hard to reccommend this issue completely because I think the story line and villain aren't right for the character. But it's an interesting merger of the hard line super-hero and the supernatural. Try it and see.

WHAT'S NOT

And, on the other side of the coin we have...

Daredevil #80, *Iron Man* #42, and *Sub-Mariner* #42, Gerry Conway probably shows more potential than any single comics writer in the business. At the same time, he's really messing up His Marvel stuff. His trio has 2 major faults. He's saying some good things, but he takes too many words to say them. He's overwriting everything. It's a wonder there's any room

A WANDERING FAN CONTEST!

Have we got a contest for you! The object is to create a comic hero with a descriptive name. Jack Kirby has been using them for years. Names like Darkseid, Morgan Edge, Scot Free.

Here's an example: In a world in which only the man with the higher-priced lawyer receives justice, a new lawyer appears. He really cares about the little man and fights for him.His name? JUSTIN FAIR. He's just slightly crooked?

Wasn't that simple? Just send your entry to *Tony Isabella, Wandering Fan Descriptive Dreadnought Contest,11203 Peony Ave. Cleveland, Ohio, 44111.* Deadline for entries: 11/1/71.

You want prizes? Well, if you must have them: 1st prize is the original art of page 14, *X-Men #51*. 2nd prize: The Bill Stillwell on the back page of CFM. Enter now, don't delay.

left over for the artwork. Second, and most important, Gerry seems much too occupied with tying the 3 books together with a mass of story-lines having to do with Mr. Kline. At last count, there were 4 Mr. Kline plot threads, and 3 assorted plot thread lines in the trio. I don't like to use a scorecard to read a comic. I hope Gerry can straighten them out, but, I doubt he can. He is stacking blocks on top of each other without a framework. By the time he's built a framework, the whole damn thing will fall in. I'd like to see him finish the series off soon, and then get a solid line of story-building started.

Hellrider #2: I have to tell you?

Incredible Hulk #144: Did you ever think you could get bored with Doctor Doom? I didn't, until recently. But, with that farce of his strip in *Astonishing Tales* and this Hulk-tastrophe, I have. The good doctor should retire to the showers for at least the rest of the year before venturing forth again. Please, gang?

Lois Lane#114: From an interesting attempt to tie *Lois Lane* to the best-selling Jack Kirby titles, "The Foe of 100 Faces" gets lost in a mass of plot threads. Many of these are good, but, we're never allowed to look at any one very long. The result is a story that ends long before we are ready for it. Bob Kanigher has proven incapable of handling any of Jack Kirby's creations--The Project a few issues back and Morgan Edge in this issue--and should keep his typewriter off them in the future.

Weird War Tales#1: See *Hell-Rider*.

Superboy #177: "our Traitor Super-Son" is a throwback to the bad old Mort Weisinger days. Frank Robbins, where are you when we need you?

BEHIND THE SCENES

As long as I'm discussing current comics, I want to alert you to a very interesting letters page in the *Teen Titans* #35. Bob Haney, in answer to readers' questions, talks about his scripting of the book, and he's very informative. Look into it.

In the same behind-the-scenes vein Mark Evanier and the oft-silent Steve Sherman (Hi, Steve!) have a column on the reviving of the Newsboy Legion in the latest *Jimmy Olsen* (#141). I like such discussions and wouldn't mind seeing these fact pages become more-or-less regular features of the DC and Marvel line.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

What goes on in DC's coffee room?

Well, Dwight Decker and I were talking to Joe Orlando, Marvin Wolfman, and a few other people when the subject of Orlando's taking over *Adventure Comics* (with Supergirl) came up. When he found out that Mike Sekowsky would not be drawing the strip Dwight, who is a fan of certain Sekowsky techniques, expressed his regret.

DWIGHT: Aw, no more Sekowsky crotch shots!

Orlando: No, now you'll see Oskner crotch shots!

By the way, congratulations are in order for Joe Orlando, now a father for the umpteenth time.

****

Well, as Warden Fry says...

"Remember, you can always go up there and play a harp--but, this is where the drama is!"

Friends, you cannot get much lower than *Comic Fandom Monthly*--lower than this they don't come--and it's crew of far-famed fannish freak-outs, so don't miss an issue. The Wandering Fan will return next issue.

SCI-FI AND FANTASY

BY JOE THOMASINO

"For fantasy fans looking for new heroes to...make asses of themselves over at the next con..."

Michael Moorcock's *The Knight of The Swords* confronts the reader once again with the usual run of the sword & sorcery hooplah. This is not to say that the book is not well-written or not very entertaining. It is manifestly so, if you go for this fantasy tripe. I must confess to a love of richly woven societies with complex histories and mores. This yarn contains a helmet full of such sociological delicacies. As usual, in this type of story, however, there are a large number of gaps and hazy spots in the backround, which to a naivee ignorant or lazy mind (i.e. the die-hard fantasy devotee) are intriguing.

This, the first part of a trilogy, concerns Prince Corum--The Prince of The Red Robe. In a typical fantasy-cutesy way it has a fakey sub-title, *The First Book of Corum*. The dolphin-evolved hero is the last remaining, and very naive, member of an "elder" race, being exterminated along with other "elder" races by upstart men. The extermination is being promulgated by the Knight of The Swords. He is a god-like creature temporarily in control of this plane of existance, and four others, many thousands of years in the earth's past. Corum, in a series of physically and mentally painful experiences, is slowly being transformed from a naive goop, to a grand fantasy hero in this picaresque series of books.

Apparently, the forces of chaos as represented by the Knight have taken over. They are transforming the beau tiful elder races into so much carrion, by use of their vicious animal-like minions, the mabdem or human. This commentary on human-kind's start as a vicious killer, forms a second theme along with the picaresque novel approach used by Moorcock here. In this group of stories, Moorcock seems to be showing us how much creatures of chaos, and not order as we suppose, we are.

Corum is tortured, maimed, hunted, performs miscegenation with (gods forbid) a civilized human, is transformed into a powerful, magical being by the aid of some weird prostheses, (eye and hand of ex-godlings), and in a half-assed way eventually destroys the knight of the Swords, thus regaining those five dimensions temporarily for order. Order if you couldn't guess are the good guys of this saga. Throughout this adventure, Corum is helped by various creatures of several varieties, outwits other ones, and finally uses his new left eye and hand to defeat the powerful deity the book is named for.

By the end of this first book, Corum has gained a great deal of wisdom nad knowledge. He has become a toughened and veteran god-fighter, eager for more dimension shattering encounters. These are promised in the two remaining books, *The Queen of the Swords* and *The King of the Swords*, which are yet to be released. Corum, as you might expect, also gets the girl by the end of the first book, which adds a homey touch to the tome.

To be frank, I enjoyed this book and recommend it. For fantasy nuts, of course, who are looking for new heroes to sing about, emulate and generally make asses of themselves over at the next convention, this book is great stuff. The entire trilogy promises to produce almost as many jack-ass fanatics as the *Ring Trilogy*, or the *Elric of Melnibonne* stories. For other people who enjoy an interesting tale with some intriguing backround and solid insights in to the world and it's myriad hassles (albeit in allegory here), this book (and I assume it's partners in the threesome) is well worth the cost and is an interesting addition to any collection. Moorcock is an excellent craftsman. I always enjoy his work. This piece, despite some of its cutey

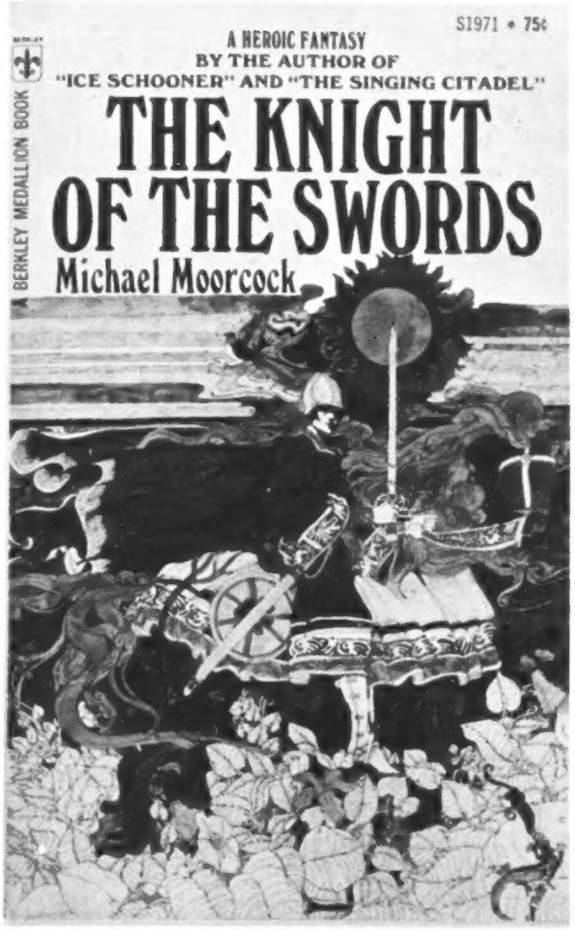
"The trilogy promises many jack-ass fanatics..."

pie touches, is a typical yeoman-like effort readily appreciated even by the most thick-headed hard sci-fi addict. In closing, let us say that *The Knight of the Swords* is a well-done excursion in to fantasy which affords a good deal of pleasure to a wide-variety of readers.

Writer Thomasino, as explained in "Staff-Lines" no longer reads comics, and, to his and my knowledge, has never read a comic story by Gerry Conway. For this reason, he will review Conway's *Midnight Dancers*. for the October issue.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The Knight of the Swords is copyright © 1971, by Michael Moorcock. It is published in the Berkley Medallion Edition by Berkley Publishing Corporation, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10016. June 1971. 176 pages, 75 cents. Cover by David Mc Call Johnston. Book number S1971.



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I'm always interested in buying large or small collections of older material (only) for resale purposes, and if you want to avoid the time and trouble of selling one item at a time, send me a list of what you have,condition,price or I'll make you an offer.

MY MOTTO: SATISFACTION GUARANTEED ON ALL TRANSACTIONS

WANTED * I've been collecting comic books off and on for 25 years and still have holes in my collection. Has anybody out there in comic land got any of the following for sale or trade ????

POPULAR - 7,16. SUPER - 19,20,54. KING (1936) - 3,4,14,16,20-22. FUNNIES - 2,17-22,27. FEATURE FUNNIES - 1,7,13,28. COMICS ON PARADE - 4,8-10,22. TIP TOP - 9,15,16,14,45. ACE - 4. RED RYDER - 2. MICKEY MOUSE BOOKS 1930-1934. BATMAN - 1. MORE FUN - 34,35,38.

BEARD MUTTERINGS I

BY NORMAN MASTERS

"DECAPITA CORNUCOPIA PLUS PLUS PLUS..."

I can't say the necessary increase in costs is particularly appealing, pocketbook-wise, but these few months of change which are now upon us have brought a feeling of renewed excitement and anticipation to the whole comic field that I haven't felt since Marvel started giving DR. STRANGE, CAPTAIN AMERICA, SHIELD et. al. their own magazines. It will be quite interesting to see how Marvel and DC shape up in the 25¢ format, what with all that extra room in a single issue to make use of.

I hope, personally, to see a larger number of issues devoted fully to one long story, the more complex the better. Most comic stories that are worth doing benefit from a more lengthy and detailed development. The sad thing about the Al Williamson FLASH GORDON'S was that you got no meat, no excitement, no involvement to the individual stories. Things were just starting and whammo, it was finished & time for next story. Use up 3 story ideas per issue--all with good potential--and flush them down the drain. No chance for character development at all--amounting to a dismal waste of potentiality. And poor Phantom, one of my favorite characters (as a character), will probably stay in the same kind of boat until he dies out from lack of sales...*sigh*

At the point of this writing, only one Marvel 25¢-er has hit the stands in this area--ASTONISHING TALES- so I will have to limit myself to the DC"s that have appeared, they being more numerous (that is if Branc wants this column on time!) (Ed. Note: he does).

Currently the principal concern is "How do we fill the extra spaces- and try to keep most of our titles on the stands?", I would suppose. And, the obvious answer is "reprints". Reprints of Green Arrow, Superman or Batman don't enthuse me in the least bit--tho I would probably be interested in seeing some reprinted 40's Superman and/or Batman stuff. Reading thru Steranko's HISTORY OF COMICS, I occasionally get the desire to peruse some of those initial Batman vs. Half Face stories along with a few other initial conflicts with various other villians. And being as it's my almost unbreakable personal rule never to pay more than cover price for a comic book...

What I would really like to see in reprints in the DC line are the JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA stories and single stories about various members of the roster. I tend to particularly like heroes like: Starman, Spectre, The old Flash, Dr. Fate, Black Canary of earth-two, Atom and Hawkman--all this, again from the 40's and maybe JSA tales into the early 50's.

This might imply (and said implication is not without validity) that I find the old Simon-Kirby reprints interesting as a result. I do, but none of the characters are as colorful as the aformentioned, and I'd rather see Dr. Fate, Starman et. al. instead. But, for the nonce, I guess we take what we get...these Kirbys reprints are, of course, crappy as stories (just as the Marvel reprints of "Golden Age" Captain Americas and Submariner's were pretty crappy), but they're still interesting just for their antiquity, and in the fact that they are the roots of what is really the <u>only</u> golden age of super-heroes comics--now, and the past seven years or so.

Somewhat surprisingly, the comic I've gotten the most enjoyment out of in this month's offerings is DC's new THE DARK MANSION OF FORBIDDEN LOVE (the title which is a parody in itself!). Looking at it with hindsight, it is surprising that gothic romances stuff hasn't hit the comics before now. From all the gothic pb's on the stands, it's obvious the material is selling pretty well. Of course,--the housewives probably comprise the ma-

"The sad thing about Williamson's FLASH GORDON was that you got no meat, no excitement, no involvement..."

jor audience for gothic thrillers and they may well consider themselves too sophisticated to be reading comics! However, it would seem that lonely teens who read the romance stuff in bundles would appreciate a bit of suspense and mystery to leaven the goo and heart-throbs. A bit of story, you know.

Well, it's here now--the formula stuff--but still enjoyable for what it is. In "The Secret of the Missing Bride" we get that air of mystery and suspense (as is to be expected, it being a gothic) that has been so appealing of late in BATMAN. But this issue of DMOFL is refreshing (to me this once, at least) for a two-fold reason. Firstly, I don't really got what Batman's got (well, I don't got what Laura Chandler's got, either, come to think of it...namely, a couple of knockers...). But it's just kind of pleasent to empathize with a normal type person instead of a super hero, for a change, in a comic story long enough to get involved in. Secondly, it just occurred to me a couple of months ago what a real dearth of interesting femme heroines we've got (like, I like to look at the curves and the half-revealed bodies, you know...Well, really--just to assure you--it's a cool and detached aesthetic appreciation of the feminine flow of line, my yew for that yang, or something like that...). I can't really say that DMOFL exactly fills my forbidden desire, but it's kinda nice anyway.

The story itself was interesting and semi-suspenseful (if you let it be) albeit, ultimately, predictable. Various scenes brought back memories of Jim Steranko's "Dark Moon Rise, Hell-Hound Kill," which was pleasent in itself. (Ed. Note: Stan Lee, I'm not, but I believe the story appeared in NICK FURY, AGENT OF SHIELD #2 -JB) The people who "did it" were too obvious--I kept hoping that surely it had to be someone else--but, unfortunately, there was none of the finesse of a good whodunit story (but the predictable ending was far preferable to the nazi-style ending Steranko dragged into his tale of the gothic and Sherlockian). Lots of very weird people--as should be expected in the gothic tradition--and associations surface again, this time with Shirley Jackson's great WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE. The layouts on the book were very appealing. At all times they furthered action in some manner or deepened implications.

Just to end things on a trivial note, I'll mention the comment that stuck out like a sore thumb in Miracle Talk in the latest MISTER MIRACLE (#4). "*As to Marvel, more imagination is used in the credits than in any given story.*" The ridiculousness of the statement itself goes beyond comment, so there's no need even to deal with the content (not to mention the fruitlessness of discussing "which is better: Marvel or Dc"? which goes on ad nauseum). What astonished me was the irresponsibility and juvenility of people in an editorial position. Granted, it's expected in fanzines--and one figures "Well, just give them some time, they'll grow up," but one doesn't expect it in a pro context. I reasonably expect said people to be a bit more level-headed, mature, and to have knowledge enough to respect what their competitors are doing, even if they ARE their competitors.

Let us realize that Marvel has always demonstrated this kind of respect and gentlemanliness in print--towards ALL the other practicioners of their art, including the competitors. They've never lowered themselves to this level of viciousness that tends to crop up now and again at National. (to be fair to Kirby, let's point out specifically that only Mark Evanier and Steve Sherman can be credited with this instance.) Let it also be pointed out that psychologically, the need and action of the lashing out from this low a level only shows an innate feeling of inferiority and jealousy on the part of said speakers. People who really believe they're producing the superior product let their product speak for itself; they don't have to resort to these kinds of inflamatory shit-throwing measures to gain added attention and notoriety.

FANZINE WATCH

BY WALLY STOELTING

"Dwight Decker may have reinstated the fannish art of humorous stories about fans."

A bright light in the shimmering universe of fanzines has been the Blue Placque Publications. The BPP came into being under Carl Gafford, Lohr McKinsty and David Brown during 1967. *Minotaur* #1 appeared in November of 1968 to herald the beginning of what is now a long list of fanzines. Mc Kinstry and Brown are gone but "The Gaff" remains as mentor of the BPP.

The Bpp is a co-op. In Gafford's own words: "We figured if three editors could get together to produce a zine, why can't several zine editors get together to share the costs of advertizing and production?" Thus, *Minotaur* #1 contained 32 ditto pages and featured two strips and a text story. One strip, The Bobcat, didn't reappear until #7. The other, Star-Heathen, became the zine's number one attraction, and a whole series on him was reprinted in a special issue that sold out.

Minotaur #2 saw the entrance of Eddie Romero with a strip, the Esper. Eddie gave *Minotaur* some of its best artwork in the non-strip collage-type. Joe Jenkins debuted soon, and his artwork has improved tremendously of late. About issue six, text became an important feature in *Minotaur* zines. Behind Rob Rucker's tantalysing tales came Sheldon Wiebe's aword and sorcery sequences.

Recent issues have followed the comics industry's steps toward relevancy, but good story-telling, nice art, and the friendliness of the contribbing members continue to be *Minotaur*'s mainstays. And if you really looked, relevancy was there alwayss, only more hidden and less proclaimed.

Minotaur may now be the best strip zine in fandom; it is easily one of the best. Meanwhile, the co-op has grown considerably, and now currently contains eighteen members and twelve zines. The BPP has set up their rules and are about to hold their elections in the near future. Until then, Carl has to be considered the moving factor in Blue Placque Publications, as it's publisher (he publishes many of the zines), editor, and the lone member of the founders still around. In this reviewer's humble opinion, he's also the best ditto artist in fandom. He has done alot of work and deserves a lot of credit, as do: Dwight Decker whose *True Fan Adventure Theatre* may have re-instated the fannish art of humourous stories about fans (not to mention the serious ones--or are they semi-serious??); Alan Greenier, whose art has improved to a point where it must seriously be considered as one of the better styles in fandom, while his story plots have been hard-hitting; Joe Jenkins, who has contribbed steadily improving art; Gordon Matthews, whose politically minded aine, *Coffinworm*, has mixed reactions and whose stories are never quite what you expect; Chuck Robinson II, who writes in a style after Stan Lee; Ed Romero, whose art is fantastic; Rob Rucker, who can write an interesting story in any field; Sheldon Weibe's out and out s&s tales, coupled with an occasional serious story; Charless Schreck, who has a refreshing, non cluttered art style; Tony Isabella, who you must already know (he writes pretty well, I guess that's why he went pro); and all the other newcomers and old-timers who help make the BPP a stronghold for good adventure, art, a good time, and perhaps a little something to grow on.

One last word, The BPP is noted for its artwork. Each zine listed underneath has some of the best artwork in fandom. The texts, stories, and plots are not as good, but they certainly aren't bad.

Rating System:

7--excellent, best in fandom.
6--very good, a definite buy, and a

"Minotaur may now be the best strip-zine in fandom; it's easily one of the best."

good zine to sub to.
5--good, enjoyable solid zine, worth trying at least once.
4--average, worth trying.
3--helper, a zine that's just starting and shows promise, but is not "there" yet. This zine needs perhaps a few good buyers and a good word to help it out.
2--fair, some major fault (like poor printing) on a not so good zine, or just dull.
1--poor, worth the money only to see what it's like.

Minotaur #12: The best of the BPP is out with an unusual issue. The Gaff adapts an Edgar Allen Poe tale to the ditto master with nice results. Tho usually a strip-zine, the rest of the zine this time is text oriented. The stand-out here is Rucker's "Cat vs. The Wizards of The Mists", an excel lent s&s tale. A good Jenkins offset cover helps out here, and the usually interesting lettercol was just that. If you're more interested in strips, #11 was very good, and #13 will contain a number of strips. #12 contains a free ish of Jenkins' comic discussion letterzine. 40¢ from Carl Gafford, 140 Lone Oak Drive, New Milford, Connecticut 06776. Rates a "6".

Realm #3: could perhaps be best described as being typical of today's zines: it is offset, has a small folio and lettercol, and many illoes in experimentation. Once past these must items, you find a zine rich in talent. The artwork, save for a few experiments, is darn good. The cover is very good. While "The Great Obscenity Raid" is too much like *Farenheit 451* for my taste, "maya" has a very interesting thought, coupled with excellent art. A text story, "A Death of Shadows" is good,and "Bigger Fish" could be pro magazine material. Good buy for 50¢. Ed Romero, 2000 N. Grant Ave., Springfield, Missouri, 65803. Rates a "5".

Comique #4: This is a strip zine. The art in *Comique* ranges from good to fair, and the stories are about the same."Land of Destiny", and "Ours to Destroy" are only fair strips. "Moon or Darkness" contains average art and an interesting little idea on parallel worlds. "Judgement Day" is a nothing story with excellent artwork. "Tog" is a feature Lee/Kirby would've written in pre-hero Marvel days. "The Protectors" is much like the old *Avengers* in plot and art. From Carl Gafford, address elsewhere. Rates "4".

Mysterian #2: features the ever-improving art of Joe Jenkins. Katy Demlow turns in a fair "Adalia" and can be a fan artist worth watching (no pun intended). Joe draws R-Man pasably and does a good job on "Deathy-Angel". The problem with these strip features is a basic lack of a good story-line. Gordy Matthews contribs one of his usually unusual stories, that I think is below par. This zine is improving, and with a little help could be very good. Joe Jenkins,701 Bartley Place, Toledo, Ohio 43609. Rates a "3-4".

Unnamed Ditto Zine #1&2: #1 is almost pure experimentation. The back cover and inside back cover are two great pieces of art. #2 contains rock reviews and words to "meaninful" songs. It also has a lot of shade plating experimentation. There are many great ditto illoes here, and an offset folio, with some of THE BEST art I've seen. 25¢ #1 rates "3", #2 rates "5".

Reader, editor take note: When you buy zines, mention that you saw it in here. When the editor finds out that this column helps him (even 1's evoke some response), he'll send his zine to me, which in turn insures you a better column. Let's face it, I can not possibly buy the hundreds of fanzines that come out every year. Chances are I don't even know of half of them. By sending a free issue, the zine gets publicity, perhaps a loc, perhaps a sub from me, which will all lead to more publicity. Unlike some reviewers, I won't skim a zine. I may not read something I dislike, but, I will still mention it's existance in my review. Send zines to me, Wally Stoelting, at 5 James Street, Wilder, Vermont, 05088.

COMIC PODIUM

BY BOB PINAHA

"I wouldn't give two cents for the story in the new JUSTICE LEAGUE (92)."

Greetings, oh fan of the comics! Welcome to the start of this brand new column, designed to review those 4-color pieces of comic art which we love so dearly (and which cost so much).

What better way to start off a new column of comic reviews than by reviewing a new comic? Y'know most comic fans wouldn't be caught dead looking at a love comic. That's why I was a bit skeptical about buying DC's new magazine, *The Dark Mansion of Forbidden Love*. But after reading it, I can best describe it to you as being a comic written in the old Gothic tradition, with a lot of soap operish dialogue contained. The story is about a young girl named Laura who is welcomed (?) into the home of her best friend's family, after her best friend's death. Suspecting that she was murdered, Laura tries to uncover the dark secret of the family, while dealing with the mansion's sinister occupants. The story was a refreshing change from the super-hero type of stuff I'm used to reading. However, *DMoFL* was marred by the fact that it kept changing scenes too rapidly, subjecting the reader to too many important details in too rapid a succession. The art, you ask, is done by a fella by the name of DeZuniga, Tony I think. All I can say is that I think, he'll have a bright future at DC.

Justice League of America #92: It winds up the two-part annual JLA/JSA teamup. The main attraction of this issue is the return of Solomon Grundy as a villian. The story itself, well, I wouldn't give two cents for it. Put simply, it's unoriginal. It's about a little alien boy in search of his lost dog, er, pet, and the heroes' struggle with the boy, who naturally, has great strength. The only other good point is that Robin of earth-one gets a new uniform from Robin of earth-two. He informs 'our' Robin that a designer by the name of Neal Adams fashioned it for him. Corny, but it is still cute. The costume is a real knockout, giving Robin a sleek, new appearence. I only hope we readers'll see more of it.

Batman #235: this will be a memorable one because it brings a new romantic tie into the Batman's existance. The girl's Talia Ra al Ghul's daughter. I think the idea is very good because it brings a new conflict into Batman's life--whether or not to love this girl, since she appears to be a natural born killer. The Robin back-up feature continues along in a serial fashion with Robin trying his darndest to bring to justice a peace-loving hippy accused of murdering his girlfriend's father (who happens to be a cop). And gee, notice how Robin has had his cape lengthened.

Marvel Feature #1 features a new series called the "Defenders"---Marvel's answer to the "Three Stooges"! Actually, the story isn't that bad, what with Dr. Strange enlisting the aid of SubMariner and Hulk to fight off Yandroth's last threat, to blow up the world five hours after his own death. The series does have possible advantages, but with Marvel's handling of it, I doubt it'll get very far. One wearies of dialogue like: "The Hulk stomp" and "No one tell the Hulk what to do."

The Flash is dead! Well, at least his physical self in September's issue, #209. Although again, the story is not original, the way it is handled makes it very appealing to da re-

"'The Iron Messiah' is marred only by the cliches that are spread all throughout the issue."

ader. Flash's astral self is summoned to another dimension to fight off another creature threatening to engulf the universe. This issue is also high lighted with the appearence of the Flash's arch-enemies, Capt Boomerang, The Trickster, and the Super-Gorilla, Grodd from Gorilla City. A short Kid Flash story is amusing but written on a very low level designed to, I would guess, take up extra space. It involved a switching of Wally West's ring with that of one of his friends. It could have been much better, if it was longer, and if it was given some time to develop. Also featured is a "Flash Classic", "The Elongated Man's Undersea Trap".

The Phantom Stranger #15 is a superb issue featuring "The Iron Messiah." The story is very well done, marred only by the cliches spread all throughout the issue. DC's handling of the Phantom Stranger's character is very well done, in that he is kept dark and mysterious to both the characters in the book and the reader. It is even more surprising considering the multitude of writers and artists who have handled the book since it's inception in *Showcase* several years back. The Dr. Thirteen back-up had a little bit of fantastic artwork to it again by De Zuniga. The story, however, was a bit weak, relying heavily on the legend of the Piped Piper of Hamlin. To me, it was just too extreme, even for fantasy.

Having not seen *Hell-Rider* #1, I was pleasently surprised to find a copy of issue two. My comment on this issue can best be brought out by a little boy paging thru *Hell-Rider*'s companion magazine, *Psycho*, and upon seeing a monster, exclaimed to me: "horrible." The art is great. Rich Buckler, Ross Andru, Mike Esposito, Harry Roseblum, Bill Everett. The big problem with *Hell-Rider*, however, is the story. Gary Friedrich's doing the scripting, and doing a very poor job. The stories are very, very weak, and need a tremendous amount of plot development. You'd think it's strange that a story could be weak when only three of them split 68. pages. Very strange.

Well, that about wraps up my comic reviews this issue. You are encouraged to write your own opinions down and send it either to me at 24 Patton Drive, Sayerville, New Jersey, 08872 or to Joe, who'll see that it sees print in the letters section. My personal thanks go out to Joe for allowing me to comment and do these reviews on comics (Ed. note: It is my very great pleasure). I'll be back in the next issue of *Comic Fandom Monthly*, but now it's time for some...

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National is doing some really tremendous things with their new twenty-five cent magazines. Take, for instance, Jack Kirby's books. Not only are we getting Kirby's tales of New Genesis vs. Apokolips, but golden age reprints of Simon and Kirby classics. The Newsboy Legion, Sandman, and Manhunter are backing up his new yarns. As an added bonus (as if another one was needed) we're getting tales of the Young Gods.

Unfortunately, this isn't the time for much joy. Circulation is so bad, Marvel has decided to stick to twenty centers and give the retailers half the price.* I see circulation getting worse as a result. Comments?

Anyone know a *Kent Wayne* at DC? He wrote me affirming the fact that DC now offers subscriptions. Funny, he's got the surnames of National's two biggest heroes, Superman and Batman!

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*Info from *Newfangles*, 20¢ from Don & Maggie Thompson, 8786 Hendricks Road, Mentor, Ohio, 44060. Reccommended.

DEALER WATCH

BY STAN CLISH

"Fandom is a two-way street. And I'm a traffic cop. I wish to equip fans with ammunition."

A not-so-funny thing happened recently on my way to the funny farm. I noticed Joe Brancatelli's ad for FANDOM'S FANS in an ad-zine. Cost: one clam. To say I was irritated would be a massive understatement. It was my recollection that I had sent my name and address to Joe with the advertised understanding all doing so would get a free copy. I'm in Maine and my comix material is in New York City. I couldn't check it. Of course, logically, this arrangement would nearly wipe out his whole market. But I was not thinking logically. I was in the crushing grip of fandom paranoia. If I didn't receive requested comix with in two weeks after ordering, I had to be restrained by my attendants from turning the dealer in as a commie to J. Edgar Froyne. I had been burned previously by four (double) dealers. I hope you haven't experienced this type, but some in fandom have. You've sent money and have received a massive nothing. I would really like to identify these four bastards, but, my material reposes in "Fun City". I will, shortly, however.

Therefore, taking deepest umbrage I wrote a highly indignant note to Joe. Joe, being the gentleman he is, sent me a copy of FANDOM'S FANS! (Ed. Note: 'twas nothing really-JB). A covering letter stated that I was either confused (I certainly was, Ollie) or was this indicative of what's happening to fandom? This generous touch restored my faith in fandom if not in mankind. I sent Joe the dollar and my apology.

Understand that 99.9% of fandom is honest in their business transaction. But, .002 grams of cyanide kills.

To protect yourself from being taken, the following preventive measures can be taken.

If possible, do business with dealers you know, have dealt with before or have fandom standing. This, of course, is not always possible.

If the dealer does not pay for or suggests insurance, send a quarter & state you must have insurance to prevent any misunderstandings. This is a must.

Spot the obvious. I recently came upon an ad in a zine that some fortunate chap in Mexico City was offering *Action* #1 for $100. "Don't worry, I have many," he added. I don't wish to impugn the verity of some young businessman, but the ad had the fragrance of a fart in a phone booth.

Keep carefully detailed records. This is imperitive. Without them, you are helpless. Have on hand your check or money order stubs, the ad you responded to, the date your buy order was sent, any further correspondence from the dealer, the dates and copies of any further correspondence you directed to him, the exact nature of what you requested originally, i.e., anything and everything concerning your buy. I repeat. This information you MUST have.

Look to: *Stan's Weekly Express*, PO Box 207, Dayton, Ohio, 45406, fandoms only weekly ad-fanzine. Advertisers voluntarily sign a pledge earning for them the WE (Weekly Express) seal of Approval. They can use their WSA on all ads indicating their integrity. As seller in the case of wants or as dealer, they agree to abide by a code of ethics, which severely paraphrased by me, reads: No false advertising; sold or requested substitute merchandise must be shipped within 7 days of payment date; WE is to be notified in case of dispute, chronic complainers will be so noted; if the code is violated, the culprit goes on a probationary list until cleared; if not cleared, his name goes to the WE reporting bureau.

As Stan puts it: "The function of WRB is to protect you from those who fail to do business honestly..." Dues are paid to join the WRB. You get a WRB membership number, and receive a

"Pony Express delivered 1st class mail between St. Louis and San Francisco faster..."

number of confidential lists and reports; bulletins concerning complaint notices, progress & final disposition of such possible frauds. Also, you'll receive recommendations for future transactions with tainted dealers. You'll be notified via air mail special delivery (55¢ cost to you) of definite frauds.

You also agree to report any possible miscreants, any dealer abusing WE privleges, furnish copies on any pertinent information, keep all communications confidential and abide by the director of the bureau's decision rendered. WRB will follow through for you.

There's more, much more. Even if you don't advertise in the WEEKLY EXPRESS or join WRB, you should still write to Stan if you've been stiffed. Include your evidence. You'll add to WE-WRB's information input.

Join the AMERICAN COMIC CLUB, 1719 28th Avenue, San Francisco, California, 94122. Annual membership is $2. Their last ad I saw was in RB-CC #82. I don't know if they're still with it or have skipped an issue, or possibly recruited enough members to discontinue advertising. Their modus operandi is much like WE-WRB. Joiners receive a membership card and A.C.C. stickers with personalized numbers. When you advertise you attach the A.C.C. sticker. That means you're clean. If any member feels cheated, he submits xeroxed evidence to A.C.C., who then solicits xeroxed evidence to the "cheater", showing he's not at fault. If the "cheater" can't or won't produce, ALL other members are so notified. Good standing is resumed when the ACC is informed by the complainer that the matter was satisfactorily ended. As membership grows, ACC states they will contract permanent legal counsel who will advise any aggrieved member for an sase.

So you've taken the proper precautions, but you're purchased merchandise doesn't show. Does our mighty Postal Service completely break down when confronted with a comic book? The Pony Express delivered 1st class mail between St. Louis and San Francisco faster than the postal service does today. No joke, just agonizing fact. But I know of no piece of mail that has failed to reach me except in the case of comix. You figure it.

Sometimes, a temporary financial problem, an unexpected vacation, a sudden move to a new locale or personal problems can cause a delay. Regardless, the buyer has fulfilled his obligations, the seller must satisfy his responsibility, at least to the extent of a concisely worded 6¢ postcard of explanation. This preventive medicine having failed, let's treat

"Unless you're particularly zealous, or operate in the rarified stratosphere of Rogofsky, forget a lawyer!"

the disease.

Fourth class mail requires three weeks on the average to reach its destination. After five weeks have elapsed since you ordered and you've received nothing--

Double check your records, and the original as to make absolutely sure of your facts.

Send a 6¢ post card to the dealer in question. State when you sent your buy order, what you requested, if you have room on the card, and the amount you sent. State in gentlemanly fashion you wish to hear from him within ten days. You want to settle it now without taking action through the postal service, his state's attorney-general or small claims court. Don't threaten him. You can wind up looking rather insipid afterwards and hysterical at present.

But, after ten days, nothing.

Contact your bank to check it's clearing house to see if your check or money order has been cashed and by whom. Likewise, contact the post office if you sent a postal money order to him. You may wish to do this before writing the dealer, informing him you're aware your check/money order has been cashed in his name.

You're now on firm grounds. Write the dealer accordingly. Send him another post card and tell him you must take action. Detail the action you're taking. Should you contact his better business bureau? Nadar could have a field day with this toothless pygmy. But it can't hurt, and it might help.

Phone your post office. Ask for the postal inspector. Tell him you wish to prosecute for mail fraud. Almost all cities with a population of over 50,000 have a resident inspector while smaller cities have regionals-one you can write, no matter how little money you've lost, they'll take your case IF you've got one. You must have the solid evidence I've detailed previously. There is no cost to you. The government (translation: taxpayers) picks up the tab.

If you're living at home, you may wish to enlist parental aid. You'll get a great sense of satisfaction if you handle all of it yourself, but fathers or mothers or older brothers are invaluable. Of course, your age or I should say maturity, has a lot to do with it. A thirteen year old usually generates meager political-clout (Ed. note: in that respect they are just like us adults -JB).

If you have letterhead stationary you can legitimately use, use it. Type your letters if at all possible. Keep them *neat, reasonable, brief, and factual.* Don't scream. There's toc damn much of that already. You'll turn off those who can help.

Send a letter to the state attorney general of your dealer's state, AND to your state attorney general. An example: Mr. James Erwin, Attorney General, Augusta, Maine 04412. You'll find their name in any 1971 almanac. I've written attorney generals before and have always gotten action--quick, effective, action.

Take your case to a small claims court. They usually take cases of under $100. No court or lawyer's costs are involved.

Write JUSTICE WANTED, in care of Mike Hoover, 94 West 8th street, Upland, California, 91786. As detailed in RBCC #82, page 62, you send one legitimate complaint per month with xeroxed evidence to be filed until it is needed. Include one 8¢ stamp per complaint. JUSTICE WANTED'S leadership must remain secret for him/them to be effective. He'll keep his column going in RBCC if fandom interest is forthcoming.

Hire a lawyer? Unless you're particularly zealous or operate in the rarified stratosphere of Howard Rogofsky, forget it. Costs may outweigh possible gain, and what if you lose?

Allow me to repeat. Almost all of the dealers are gentlemen of the very first water. Many give more than they receive. This dissertation is intended to help both seller and buyer. Fandom is a two-way street. And I'm a trappic cop. I wish to equip fans with the necessary equipment. Let them know they have many avenues of rescue. With this information, they can order with the confidence the cavalry stands ready to charge.

And an Amerindian told you so.

can franks sell Superman?

BY JOE BRANCATELLI

Could hot dogs sell comic fandom? That was the question. The question was answered, in a disappionting way, on July 17th and 18th as Phil Seuling and ACBA net Nathan's Famous Franks. Nathan's is an institution in New York. It's location, 43rd and Broadway, is right in the heart of the world's busiest city. And yet, this combination mini-con-exhibit failed miserably.

Understand, this 1st annual comic exhibit was NOT meant for any of the 2000 or so fans who attended Seulings perienially successful comic art con vention. This was meant to be a little exposure for fandom. It was meant to acquaint the average New Yorker to comics in general, and ACBA (Academy of Comic Book Arts) in particular. This is why it was held in Nathan's lower level. Theoretically, a casual eater would just leave his table, see the exhibit and browse around. Unfortunately, it didn't work out that way at all. It was less an exhibit, and more of a dealer's table area. Altho only 8 dealers and ACBA were there, that was all there was. There was no exhibit and no display. So they got very few casual observers. The dealer tables, which went for $75 a pop, saw little business. How were they going to convince a casual observer that that *Jungle* #1 they remembered was worth $75, when many fans didn't believe it.

Besides the lack of proper items to attract the desired audience, the location itself was atrocious. They were buried far in the corner, out of the immediate sight of most of the diners. Most of Nathan's business is done in the upper level, and whoever wandered downstairs for a table could not even see the display area. To top off the mismanagement, the publicity was poor. Very few people even knew it was going on even when they got in to Nathan's. So, having never gotten the audience they were looking for, the display was left to all us hardcore fans who came and all of Nathans employees. I don't know if the people from Nathan's enjoyed themselves, but I did.

This gathering was unlike any other fan-clave I've ever been to. It's not a con or a mini-con where you'd normally report on panels, shows and other items. It wasn't a display, where one would normally report on what was on display or exhibit. It was a unique experience, and I'm sure most of the fans enjoyed it (see the photos on this and other pages for fan doings). The fact remains that regardless of how the display impressed or depressed the fans, the people most wanted were strangers. If the con was at all successful, it did manage to leave the casual observers with some very definite opinions.

The first couple I talked to were slightly taken aback. They'd come in for a frank on a typical hot New York saturday, "and stumbled on a batch of freaks." I thought it might be better not to continue my discussion after an opening blast like that, but they seemed to want to talk about it. Until I replayed my tape, even I didn't want to believe how much they disliked comic collectors. Their arguements ran along the regular lines. I was informed by this charming couple how in order: I was too old for comic books, that they shouldn't allow anyone to sell comics for so much, how stupid the stories were, how they did not know how many "idiots and dummies collected comics" and finally how all us "hippies" should be doing more legitimate things than collecting. I'm sure we've heard most or all of those arguements before, but I was particularly "impressed" with their viciousness. I invited them to sit with me and have lunch and talk about it. We talked for almost an hour.

They both admitted to reading some

comics when they were younger. They also said they only looked at the exhibit for about 5 minutes because, in their words:"There were too many hippies their." I asked them if they had talked to anyone but me. They said no and when informed that Phil Seuling was a teacher and this reporter a registered member of the Conservative party, HE wouldn't believe me. I wanted to show them my voter registration card and bring them to Phil, but they had to leave. I'd love to say I acted as a Miracle worker and got them to change their opinion, but I can't. I never got to ask them if at some point in their life they'd read some anti-comic material (After replaying the tape, my doubts about the couple's reading ABILITY rose considerably). Funny how close these people emulated "Joe" don't you think?

As you might expect, most people were more open-mindedly amazed at the phenomenon of comics fandom. One very pretty young lady who had the dubious distinction of being stranded in New York on her vacation, said her boyfriend told her about this. He was a comic nut, but couldn't make it, and she had been given money and a want-list and told to buy what she could. Admitting the prices astounded her, she's very happy shes not a collector like her boyfriend. I wondered what she thought about the fans, and she thought they were a batch of great people "who deserved better." I'm not exactly sure what she meant by that last remark, but at least she was not close-minded.

I talked to many other people, almost all of them friendly, but wondreing if comic fans were all there. A Nathan's employee said he'd seen so many collectors meetings in the last couple of months, he wasn't surprised by anything anymore (Nathan's holds many of these gatherings; the comics-people were preceeded by coin collectors and were succeeded by stamp fans).

Whether of not this display did anything to alert people to the existance of fandom, it provided fans a rare opportunity to talk to the casual observer about comics. Despite a poor overall attendance, the first annual comic display and exhibit will be a big force in graphic arts surge toward ultimate respectability.

TOP: PHIL SEULING IMITATES A FRAZETTA MONSTER. MIDDLE: AL BARBOUR, A FILM MOGUL. BOTTOM: JEFF GREENBAUM.

LEFT: PHIL AND "A BATCH OF FREAKS." CENTER: DO
RUPTCY. RIGHT: BILL MORSE BITES HIS CYANIDE PIPE

ACBA

TABLE

LEFT: JOHN ROMITA SKETCHING THE INVISIBLE MAN
MARK HANFREELD. RIGHT: CLOSED EYES GREET

OUG FOLEY SMILES WHILE FRIEND FILES FOR BANK-
E.

N, SEATED ON COUCH. CENTER: "THE COMIC WHAT?" SAYS
LEN WEIN'S ART.

VIEW FROM CANADA

BY CLIFF LETOVSKY

"'Savage Tales' did not appear in Canada because Marvel couldn't guarantee distributors 4 issues."

Canadian comic fandom is on a mystery kick. No one seems to have any idea of what's going on. George Henderson's *Capt. George Presents* died a horrendous death at the hands of the King Feature Syndicate. *CGP* was the greatest thing to ever happen to canadian fans, and it's death leaves the Canadians in a quandry. Fanzines are slated for publication, and then are quietly dropped. The professional world in Canada, be that what it is, is no help. Canada's professional world is the newspapers, and there is little to recommend it. Original cartoons, i.e. syndicated one-panel pieces on Canadian wildlife and odd-occurances, is all there is to brighten up the comic pages. *The Montreal Star* has a weekly contest for "up and coming" cartoonists. The award is ten dollars for the best cartoon--one is selected each week--and it appearss in tuesday's edition. So much for the thrilling world of canadian comics.

Being a resident of Quebec province, I can only comment as a Quebec fan on the state of comic distribution. Ontario may have better distribution, but it is doubtful. As far as Quebec fans are concerned, their greatest enemy is the distributor. (Ed. Note: isn't he all of fandom's most bitter enemy? -JB) Our vaunted distributors frequently overlook the Warren magazines. We get about one of every three issues. *Savage Tales* did not appear in Canada because Marvel couldn't guarentee the distributors four issues. Something about contract obligations. There are those distributors who don't want to sell the s-f pulps. They wait awhile and rip off the covers and return them to the company for a rebate, then sell the issues to a dealer for a bulk rate.

As far as fan activities in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, there has been none. It is stone-dead. Generally, I can represent Canadian fandom well, and what ever I miss has probably been going on behind my back (and that is probably ALL that is going on).

Although Canada is barren, save for the American products, there is a distinct advantage in living in the province of Quebec. We are in the midst of many french-speaking people, and to satisy their needs in comics liturature, Quebec imports books, magazines and comic books from France. *Pilote*, the legendary French comic art weekly magazine, which has some of the most beautiful comic art work being done, is available on almost every newsstand. The French do not have a code. *Charlie*, the French Pro fanzine (there's a seperate edition in English), is also available, but not quite as easily as *Pilote*. *Charlie* contains many *bande dessinée (the French for comic art)* stories, original, and reprints. *L'il Abner*, *Peanuts*, *Mad* and many others all in the French version. It also carries four page reviews of European fanzines. The Europeans seem to have had there comics fandom organized well before Jerry Bails started the American fan movement with *Alter-Ego* in 1961. I've written Michel Feron, a noted European fan who writes for American apas but, he hasn't answered. So much for the hands accross the water policy.

Fanzines in Canada have also been undergoing a mini-revival. *The Quebec Panelologists Bulletin* is one of 3 new fanzines. It's a newszine, and it is going to need a lot of work to be up to the present standards of the top newszines. The news is old and whatever new news they have is uninspiring. *Impulse* is another new zine, edited by me, by the way. It is going to have some of today's finest art, but, we are having some textual problems. I refuse to accept garbage,but that's all I'm getting. The 3rd new zine is *Canazine*, and it seems partly good art and partly horrid. It's been due for over a year, but no show!

SOUNDING BOARD

BY STAN CLISH

"I believe this country has contributed two genuine cultural inventions. Jazz and comic books."

If anyone refers to comix...God, what a misnomer. Comic Books. Comics. Comix. Funny Books. These titles put down a legitamate art form. I believe the non-natives of this country have contributed two genuine cultural inventions. Jazz and Comic Books. But there's got to be a better appelation then comic book. Graphic Art Magazine is a thought. Illustories (a la Lev Gleason) perhaps? Illustrated novels (a la Kirby)? Adventure Art? They are all possibilities. Write me with your suggestions. Don't let the novelty of your title put you off. Anything new is scarifying. Genuine Indian artifact to the winner. I'm the judge and the jury.

As I was saying. If anyone refers to comix as junk (Feiffer was far off base), ruining your mind, confounding your soul and a symptom of hemorrhoid condition, proclaim that Kirby's DC quadrology is being read over Yale's radio station, that Orson Wells has said many times that much of his cinematography owes to a comic book format, that a course in "Comparitive Comics" is taught at ivy laden Brown University, that film directors such as Resnais, Antionini, and Felini study the comic art form as an inspiration for their critically acclaimed movies, that August *New York Times Sunday Magazine* of May 2, 1971 devoted the front page and lead article to the import and relevancy of comic books, that Hogarth's *Tarzan* panels have been exhibited at the finest Parisien art galleries, that comic books have been researched and many cerebral tomes written of them by French intellectuals, that the all time great film *Alphaville* was solidly based on comic book layouts. Or you may just tell your detractor to do a handstand in a manure pile.

DC's new 25¢ magazine policy? I'm for it. If I can get a Kirby "newie" and a Kirby classic for two-bits, I think it's a bargain.

Who's your favorite artist? If I picked an all-time pantheon of Gods, It would include: Al Williamson, Jack Davis, Frank Frazetta, Alex Raymond, Will Eisner, Wallace Wood, Mac Raboy, Burne Hogarth, Walt Disney (although he did precious little of the ary by himself), Hal Foster, Jack Kirby, Al Capp, Milton Caniff and Dan Barry.

Among the contemporary pencillers: Jack Kirby (again?), Gene Colan, The Severins, Gil Kane, Milton Caniff Jim Steranko, Neal Adams, Hal Foster, Wallace Wood and Frank Frazetta.

The greatest? Burne Hogarth.

Of course, this is a highly subjective choice, a very personal opinion. Send me your picks. If mail is sufficient, I'll publish poll results with a prize awarded to the list that most closely resembles the consensus.

In corresponding with me a six-cent postcard is fine, unless you really want to lay it on me.

Let me hear about your experiences with fannish dealers. And dealers, please, bend my ear with your gripes and glories about buyers. I'm sure we aren't perfect.

And, any of you people out in the fanlands who know of other means to protect buyers which I haven't mentioned, write.

Future columns will cover all of fandom's new price guides; behind the scenes stories of the creation of Superman and Batman et al; the science-fiction author who was impounded for inventing the atomic book in 1943; continuing reportage on dealers, and on any subject related to fandom you want to see. (ed. note: I'd like to know all your opinions on the "Dealer Watch" column. Address your comments either to me or Stan. -JB)

Talakembweakwacook matamawasi. In English: May truth be your guide and follow in your tracks.

Send comments to: Stan Clish
27 Chapman Str.
Brewer,Me. 04412

4 COLOR CARNIVAL

BY JOEL PACKER
& STEVE JENKINS

REVIEWS & PARAPHANALIA OF A VERY

Good Afternoon! Welcome to a brand new fanzine, or don't you already know about that. Welcome to a brand new column, too. Supposedly, we were asked to do comic reviews, but after careful thought and consideration and after two million comic reviews, we decided upon comic reviews, but not the boring bull you've read for many years. No, we won't relate our sad opinions to you on comics you've read three or more weeks ago (depending on how well ye editor maintains his very tiring pace), and have already formed your own opinions of.

We, will, however, review comics that will come out 6 mo. hence. How shall we accomplish this feat of miracles, you ask? Well, we could look up Doc Strange or any good sage and have him transfer us back and forth from the future. Or we can look up the old new old Superman,that's if he still can manage that feat. Finally, we could always bug the offices of DC or Marvel. But come to think of it, we wonder whether all this work is even worth it. By the time the comics hit the stands, you'd have forgotten, or disregarded our review.

What we could do is review a comic book the way you know it should be reviewed. It goes something like this here:

Captain America #143: Marvel comes through again. This time they've got a villian with the clenched fist-black power sign. Up in the Marvel offices you have a hundred bigots running loose, figuring the fast way to make a buck is to cater to the ghettoes. Clever ruse. Is Captain America a bigot?

Another would go like this:

Daredevil #81: a disgusting title logo, disgusting cover art, disgusting coloering that looks as if a 4 year old had done it, a disgusting story goofing on the Merry Marvel Marching Society, disgusting interior art by Gene Colan, who has no use for anatomy, disgusting inking job by Jack Abel, and who's Jon Costa? What ever happened to Artie Simek or Sam Rosen? More reprints, too.

Of course, we could also do comic reviews the way you absolutely despise with all your heart and soul. It goes somewhat like this:

The Defenders #1: This is a new Marvel atrocity, and that's being a bit generous. To start the issue off we have an exceedingly bad cover that is drawn by whom I believe to be Neal Adams. The usual jamming up of writing sprawled up all over the page is what Marty Goodman says "Sells the book." That's not an exact quote, of course, but we're sure it's something along that line. We've perceived this line of readoning from what we have heard since talking to Roy Thomas, SEVERAL times, and listening to Stan Lee's myriad radio and television interviews. Coloring is better in it's worseness on this job. When Marvel goes out to have a triumphant "horror book", they do it. The art is disgustingly repititious and scratchy. Not even a magnificent inking job by Bill Everett can save this one. Come to think of it, it's the usual...ugh, Ross Andru. The Roy Thomas story that graces this issue is coupled closely, with Andru's art. They share that self-same descriptive adjective...ugh and double ugh. This book is worth the quarter, though, because this is a comic fans comic. There's a beautiful Bill Everett Sub-Mariner story from the late (great) Timely. Some of the all time best came from there (ed note: and some of the all time worst, too -JB). Back to the new stories and disaster, however. The third and last story brought a lump to our throats, we wanted to heave. It's hard to look at a story with bad art, though a good script usually saves it. Unfortunately both script and art flopped together. We never liked Donnie Heck, and this piece substantiated that be-

lief. Roy Thomas tells his origins as well as he tells some of (or should I say as bad as) regular stories. Roy, was indeed once a very good writer. Now, though he's sunken to the hack level. Obviously loaded down with work as he is, his scripts no longer have that Thomas quality they had a scant two or three years ago (or perhaps he's forgotten he used to be a fan, eh?).I much rather read a Conway story anyday, but give me three years and I don't know what my thoughts might be. I once thought Marvel reigned the comics field,but how that has changed (by the way, we assure you that this is not being presented as fact, but highly opinionated commentary).

Now since ye editor has given me a free hand, I shall now talk about one of my very favorite subjects, James Warren's world of gory garbage.

Eerie #36: Gee, whiz, we remember when we first bought issue two off the stands, or was that issue thirty-two? Just goes to show you how Warren keeps a great level of consistantcy (a very low level). Really, tho, just like everyone else, Warren goes up and down in material. He comes up with some very very good stuff, and also get the very bad stuff. The cover is very definitely the latter. What ever happened to Frank Frazetta, or Ken Smith, or even RGK (though he never did do a painting for Warren now did he...probably too expensive anyway...but wouldn't a Krenkel look nice on that pap?). This cover is done by some artist named Enrich. It is in very poor taste and represents nothing suitable for the horror or fantasy fan. Warren seems to have latched on to many new artists, trying to break into the field (We wonder how much cheaper they are?). Some of them being very good. He's also collected some brand new authors to boot. Berni Wrightson started out in Warren mags, you know. He broke in back in 65 or 66 with a piece for the CREEPY fan page. Frank Brunner, a fine young free lancer started here, too.

As you page through the book you find a lot of the artists' foresaking the pen, any working strictly in soft pencils. Bruce Jones, another young artist has a ten page story done completely in pencils. As I recall, the icebreaker in this technique was Neal Adams, when he did ROCKGOD for Warren publications. That was possibly the greatest story ever done in a Warren book. How could it fail. He had three terrific talents: Frank Frazetta did the cover, Neal Adams did the interior, and Harlan Ellison did the story of Rockgod.

There are some more new talents in this issue that deserve some notice. This artist's name is Marato. He did a story scripted by Steve Skeates. He has a lot in common with veteran Angelo Torres. The second new talent is a fellow, name of Rubio (whew, gotta watch these one-name artists). This guy has got a tremendous relation to much of Ernie Colan's stuff.

Generally, the stories were fair to good. The best was undoubtably a piece called "Prototype", written by Steve Skeates and illustrated by that man, Bruce Jones. The fanfare section has a profile on an author who has already done much work for comics. It tells his whole life tale, and it 's a nice piece, if it turns you on.

Well that about wraps up this godforsaken column.

One of us will be back next time. Bye for now.*

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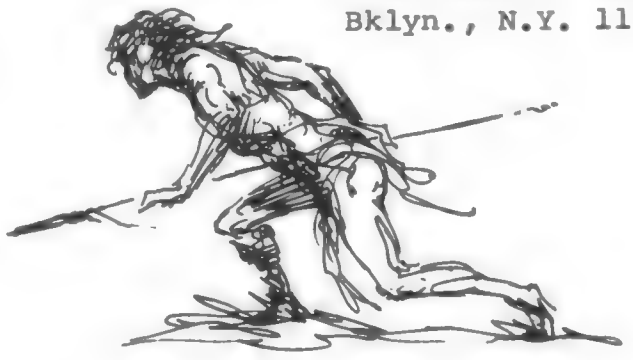
*Next issue this column becomes the sole property of Steven Jenkins. Correspondences can be sent to the editor or directly to:

Steve Jenkins
2196 East 21 Str.
Bklyn., N.Y. 11229



—RGK—

HAPPENINGS

Everybody's getting into the act. Adam Malin convenes the first annual Creation Con on November 27 and 28th, Thanksgiving weekend. Guest include Krenkel, Williamson, Frazetta, Jones, Morror, Kaluta, Brunner, and others. It's being held in the New Yorker hotel (34th and 8th Avenue, New York City), addmission $2.50 for both days $1.50 for one. Dealers tables go $20, program book ads $20 a page. He's got a fanzine table, too. Write to: Adam Malin, Chairman, 16 East 2nd Street, Freeport, NY 11520. Come down, single room $16 a day (Double $21). Panels include: EC panel, Editor's panel, a WEB panel. Also: auctions, displays, KING KONG and METROPOLIS. Come and say hello to ye editor.

THE ACADEMY OF
COMIC BOOK ARTS
509 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY 10017
MUrray Hill 7-0890

The Academy of Comic Book Arts released the "6-7"th issue of it's monthly newsletter. It's the first issue to be released to the fans who paid $5 to become supporting members. It runs eight one-sided sheets. Contains four pages on the SHAZAM awards, announcements of academy business (past and present meetings, sketchbook,etc. etc.). At present, fans spending $5 to join are wasting their money, as the organization is pro-oriented. At a later time, perhaps.

From the turn of the century until the early 40's, oranges were packed in labeled crates. When the oranges were eaten, the crates became go-cart bodies and no one thought much about the labels. No one until freelance writer John L. Phillips found a few in a San Francisco antique shop.

The labels flourished during the late teens, twenties & thirties, pre-stamped corrugated boxes coming into vogue after WWII. Shouting optimism despite the depression, they carried names like Summit, Hi-Tone, Spendid.

Phillips owns about 170 labels."I thought for a while that some of the guys who did them were successful commerical artists just making money during the depression. But none of them were famous at all. This was never recognized as an art form."

The Whitney museum (945 Madison, New York, New York, 10001) is currently displaying most of Phillips's orange crate labels on a 30-foot mural,covering the coffee shop wall.In honor of the occasion, an orange-freeze has been added to the menu. The display runs through September.

This article is copyright ©, 1971 by the NYM Corporation. Reprinted with permission. Originally printed in NEW YORK MAGAZINE, August 9, 1971. I was at the exhibit. Tremendous. The orange freeze was good too.

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STAFF LINES

BY JOE BRANCATELLI

Well, you've come to the very last article in COMIC FANDOM MONTHLY. How did you like us? Maybe more important what is CFM like??? We're not ALTER-EGO, nor are we COMIC CRUSADER. And, we're certainly not CAPA-Alpha. So, exactly what are we? Well, I as the editor, hope we've come across as a mixture of them all. We've tried for the crisp professionalism of AE, the informative quality of CC and the atmosphere and opinionated contribs of an apa. We hope we've succeeded. I think that you should take a brief look at the people who are COMIC FANDOM MONTHLY.

STAN CLISH: I first became aquainted with Stan when I was doing FANDOM'S FANS. At the time I was planning a second issue comprising a report on the dealers of fandom. Stan and I had been talking about what he called "Fandom Paranoia". It was the fear of being ripped-off by dealerss and pseudo-dealers. He was foing to write for the report. Although the book collasped, Stan is here with his helpful column.

MARK EVANIER: Mark's a pro now, but he's still a fan at heart. Mark now works with Steve Sherman as an assistant to Jack Kirby. He's had an illustrious career as a fan. It was this very Mark Evanier who invented Marvel's fan ranks several years ago. He was MARVELMANIA"s first editor, and has written for many fanzines, plus being a member of EXPONENT and MYRIAD, two respected apas.

TONY ISABELLA: Tony really needs no introduction, but let's do it anyway. Despite his disclaimer, the WANDERING FAN was 1 of the primary reasons CONCUSSION won an Alley Award. He wrote the script for the BEWARE THE CREEPER magazine, and was also the editor. Monetary problems stunted the book's life before it even made it off the drawing board. He's in 3 apas, CAPA-Alpha, MYRIAD and EXPONENT and was MC at the "Goethe" Awards.

NORMAN MASTERS: Norm first attracted me with his 50 page apa-zines in MYRIAD. He's editor of sci-fi's NO-EYED MONSTER, and has taught English and is a truly great writer. His style is inimitable, or haven't you noticed. He writes everything well.

CLIFF LETOVSKY: Cliff is our resident Canadian fan. He came to my attention as a result of his off-beat contributions to MYRIAD. He's now editing IMPULSE, a very good zine indeed. He has a good fanzine, apazine and now a column. You'll like his enthusiasm if nothing else.

JOEL PACKER: Joel lived only onee block away from me for ten years, and I never met him until after the 1970 COMIC ART CONVENTION. Joel is one of those fans who'll buy anything if it is related to fandom. That's why he's writing a column. He's eminently qualified to write on any fandom subject around. He's presently in the apa Galaxy. Good Writer.

BOB PINAHA: He's a guy who had the misfortune to come into MYRIAD with a contrib done in offset. To make every thing worse, he couldn't write worth a damn, and he drew even worse. Yet, by the end of his first year he was voted MYRIAD'S most improved member. He's still getting better, ane one day he'll be one of the greats in the fan world. He's also in EXPONENT.

WALLY STOELTING: Wally is one of the all time classic fanzine writers. He worked any number of years for the FFCG's FAN INFORMER, as their reviewman, and now moves to CFM. Wally's a big apa contributor, too. He's been in MYRIAD, SAPS, and GALAXY to namee a few.

JOE THOMASINO: Joe used to be a comic book madman. He had 1000's and then one day dropped comics cold. Now he's deep into sf,but dislikes organized sf fandom. He's said of sf fanaddicts: "I found them if not immature and obnoxious, generally bold, narrow-minded and silly. Organized sf fans have driven many new fans from sf who would've otherwise enjoyed it." He's an irritant, you'll like him.

FROM

comic fandom monthly

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